

Academic Vocabulary for Chapter 2

These are the terms you should know
as you read and analyze the stories in this chapter.

Character traits The special qualities of a character, such as his or her behaviors, values, habits, likes, and dislikes.

Characterization The way writers reveal how and why characters think, feel, and act. In **direct characterization**, the writer explains straight out, or directly, what the characters are like. In **indirect characterization**, the writer provides clues to what the characters are like. Clues are often found in the characters' words, private thoughts, and actions, as well as in the ways they look and dress.

Motivation The reasons why a character acts or thinks in a certain way.



Protagonist The main character in a story, usually the one who sets the action in motion.

Antagonist The character or force that blocks the protagonist from achieving his or her goal.

Subordinate characters Less-important characters.



Flat character A character who has only one or two key personality traits.

Round character A character who has many personality traits.

Stock character A one-sided character whom we think of as a "type"—for example, the absent-minded professor.



Dynamic character A character who changes in an important way during the story.

Static character A character who is the same at the end of the story as at the beginning; static characters are most often subordinate characters.



Reading Standard 1.3 (Grade 8 Review)


Use word meanings within the appropriate context and show ability to verify those meanings by definition, restatement, example, comparison, or contrast.

Reading Standard 3.3

Analyze interactions between main and subordinate characters in a literary text (for example, internal and external conflicts, motivations, relationships, influences), and explain the way those interactions affect the plot.



Reading Standard 3.4

Determine characters' traits by what the characters say about themselves in narration, dialogue, dramatic monologue, and soliloquy.



For Further Information . . .

Be sure to read these essays in *Holt Literature and Language Arts*:

-  **Characters**, pages 74–75.
-  **Character Interactions**, pages 96–97.